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NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

ARMED SERVICES INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

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Admiral Stansfield Turner  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear Admiral Turner:

From your recent appearance before the Committee, you could tell that we are particularly interested in the growing asymmetries in U.S.-Soviet ICBM capabilities.

26 Jan 78

Worked wrap-up

While a number of questions exist pursuant to the assessments and assumptions underlying your presentation before the Committee on the strategic balance, we were particularly concerned that you did not consider anything particularly significant about the tests conducted with the SS-19 late last year.

As you pointed out, one ICBM flight test does not necessarily immediately translate into an operational capability. However, the tests conducted with the SS-18 and the SS-19 would indicate that the Soviets have successfully developed a new guidance system that can be effectively exploited by their entire ICBM force structure. This, in combination with the new bus for the SS-18 and the new separation technique for that bus, in our view, points out the fact that the U.S. will need to revise its accuracy projections of Soviet ICBM's in the early 1980s, if not before.

Since you failed to address the implications of the tests conducted with the SS-19, we would appreciate your providing this assessment, and the necessary revisions you feel we need to make in terms of our projections for Soviet ICBM accuracy, in writing so that it can be made available to members of the Committee.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Samuel S. Stratton

Sincerely,

Robin L. Beard